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HOUSE MEMORIAL 16

46TH LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - FIRST SESSION, 2003

INTRODUCED BY

Richard D. Vigil

A MEMORIAL

**REQUESTING THE STATE HIGHWAY AND TRANSPORTATION DEPARTMENT TO
DIRECT ITS EFFORTS AND FEDERAL FUNDING TOWARD MAKING PEDESTRIAN
AND BICYCLE TRAFFIC SAFER AND CREATING SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOLS.**

**WHEREAS, New Mexico has the nation's highest pedestrian
fatality rate; and**

**WHEREAS, New Mexico has the nation's sixth highest
bicyclist fatality rate; and**

**WHEREAS, children who walk and ride bicycles are among the
groups that are more at risk from unsafe streets; and**

**WHEREAS, many of New Mexico's communities lack sidewalks,
bicycle paths, street crossings or other elements necessary to
provide safe routes to schools; and**

**WHEREAS, the federal government provides millions of
dollars to New Mexico through the federal surface**

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1 transportation program and the federal hazard elimination
2 program to pay for non-construction costs aimed at reducing
3 injuries and deaths from motor vehicle accidents and to resolve
4 safety problems at hazardous locations and roads that
5 constitute a danger to motorists, pedestrians and bicyclists;
6 and

7 WHEREAS, decreases in fatalities among pedestrians and
8 bicyclists are more often attributable to students walking and
9 riding bicycles less and riding in cars more often; and

10 WHEREAS, the surgeon general observed that seventy-eight
11 percent of children are not active enough; one in five children
12 is overweight or at risk of becoming overweight; and one in
13 three teenagers is overweight or at risk of becoming
14 overweight; and

15 WHEREAS, safer routes to school can provide the ability to
16 increase pedestrian and bicycle traffic to help students get
17 more regular exercise;

18 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF
19 REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the state
20 highway and transportation department be requested to direct
21 more of its efforts and federal funding on improving bicycle
22 and pedestrian access and on traffic-calming projects in school
23 zones rather than simply building and widening intersections;
24 and

25 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the state highway and

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1 transportation department work with its bicycle, pedestrian and
2 equestrian committee, with school districts and law enforcement
3 agencies and with parents, teachers and school administrators
4 to develop innovative programs and initiatives to create safe
5 routes to school; and

6 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the state highway and
7 transportation department present its findings and
8 recommendations to the appropriate interim legislative
9 committee by October 30, 2003; and

10 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this memorial be
11 transmitted to the state highway and transportation department.